



COUNCIL

MEETING : Thursday, 25th February 2016

PRESENT : Cllrs. Field (Mayor), Beeley (Sheriff & Deputy Mayor), James, Dallimore, Noakes, D. Norman, Porter, Haigh, Hilton, Gravells, Tracey, McLellan, Smith, Hobbs, Lugg, C. Witts, Hanman, Lewis, Bhaimia, S. Witts, Llewellyn, Williams, Brown, Dee, Taylor, Hansdot, Patel, Randle, Toleman, Chatterton, Pullen, Etheridge, Hampson, H. Norman and Pearsall

Others in Attendance

Jon McGinty, Managing Director

Ross Cook, Corporate Director

Jon Topping, Head of Finance

Shirin Wotherspoon, Solicitor

Tanya Davies, Democratic and Electoral Services Manager

APOLOGIES : Cllr. Organ

61. MINUTES

61.1 **RESOLVED** – That the minutes of the Special meeting held on 28 January 2016 and the Ordinary meeting held on 28 January 2016 be approved and signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

62. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

62.1 There were no declarations of interest.

63. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (15 MINUTES)

63.1 There were no public questions.

64. PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS (15 MINUTES)

64.1 There were no petitions or deputations.

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65. ANNOUNCEMENTS (COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 2(VII))

The Mayor

- 65.1 The Mayor congratulated Councillor Chatterton on being elected as a Member of the Royal Historical Society.
- 65.2 The Mayor presented Steve Elway with the Mayor's medal in honour of his 42 and half years' service to the Council and City and in recognition of role in building and leading Aspire Trust.
- 65.3 Mr Elway thanked the Council for the unexpected honour and for the trust that the Council had placed in him over many years to deliver the vision and priorities for leisure services in the City. He noted the savings achieved by Aspire and the excellent services and facilities that its staff had provided to the people of Gloucester in partnership with the Council.
- 65.4 Councillors Porter (Cabinet Member for Environment), Haigh (Leader of the Labour Group) and Hilton (Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group) congratulated Mr Elway on his award and spoke in support of the achievements and contributions he had made. They wished him an enjoyable retirement.

Members of the Cabinet

- 65.5 Councillor Dallimore (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods) announced that Gloucester had won Best New Scheme at the Best Bar None Award. She congratulated all involved and added that she hoped it would encourage more premises to join the scheme.
- 65.6 Councillor Noakes (Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure) announced that the Tourist Information Centre won Gold in the South West Tourism Awards and had been shortlisted for Visitor Information Service of the Year in the national VisitEngland Awards. She congratulated the staff involved.
- 65.7 Councillor Norman (Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources) read a statement from Leadership Gloucestershire in response to the announcement about the intention of Cotswold District Council and West Oxfordshire District Council to form a unitary authority. He explained that Cotswold District was an integral part of Gloucestershire and that a meeting of the Devolution Working Group would be convened at the earliest opportunity.

66. MONEY PLAN 2016-21 AND BUDGET PROPOSALS 2016/17

- 66.1 Council considered a report of the Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources concerning the Money Plan 2016-21 and Budget Proposals for 2016-17.
- 66.2 Councillor James (Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Economy) moved the recommendations in the report and thanked the Cabinet Member for Performance and Resource and Head of Finance and his team for their work on the budget. He noted the challenging financial climate and reduction in funding from central government explaining that a significant savings would

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continue to be required in future years. He reported that cumulative savings of £10 million had been made over the last 10 years and he thanked staff for all that they had achieved. The ongoing objective was to protect frontline services and make savings through shared services, income generation and efficiencies; the Council's headcount had reduced and an accommodation review would be undertaken. £607,000 of savings were proposed for 2016/17, which was £60,000 more than required to allow a cushion for in-year variances.

Council Tax would be increased by £5; there was no longer an incentive from central government to freeze Council Tax and, during the budget consultation, residents had indicated that they supported an increase. There would be no increase to garden waste collection and parking charges.

He reported that 2015-16 had been a year of significant progress, including acting as a host city for the Rugby World Cup, securing funding for the new bus station and other key regeneration priorities. He announced that the Council would contribute up to £100,000 of revenue from the former South West Regional Development Agency assets to Gloucester City Football Club to support their objective to bring forward the football ground.

He concluded by saying that, while savings were key, so was income generation, and he stated that the Council would deliver prosperity to the City and its residents.

- 66.3 Councillor Norman seconded the motion and noted the need to make difficult decisions in order to protect the services that residents prioritised. He explained that there was an assumption from central government that local authorities would use their powers to raise Council Tax locally and that failure to do so would impact on future funding settlements. He reported that the decision to increase Council Tax by £5 would reduce the savings required over the life of the Money Plan by £500,000.

The majority of the £607,000 savings for 2016/17 were already in place to enable full delivery in year and included a proposed transfer to the General Fund of £60,000 as protection against failure to deliver any of the savings in-year. Savings in 2017/18 and 2018/19 would need to be frontloaded, but this would enable reductions in subsequent years.

He acknowledged that the savings targets were challenging and advised that they would be carefully monitored to ensure delivery of key outputs and maintenance of the General Fund in excess of £1.6 million throughout the term of the Money Plan with capacity to manage in the event of any slippage.

He thanked the residents of Gloucester for the record response to the budget consultation and advised that the core views had informed the revised budget proposals. He stated that the Administration would continue to listen to residents when putting forward future savings or spending proposals.

In respect his Performance and Resources portfolio he noted £175,000 of savings achieved through the transfer of the Council's Human Resources service to the County Council and the proposal to make a saving in the budget for the Minimum Revenue Provision. A further £20,000 of savings had been identified through

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efficiencies that would not impact on services. He thanked the Finance Team for their hard work and stated that despite the significant challenges ahead, the Council would continue to deliver the services required by residents.

- 66.4 Councillor Hilton announced that he was proposing four amendments to the budget proposals.

He proposed that the annual cost of a green bin for garden waste collections be reduced by £5 at a total cost of £90,000 per year. He advised that the reduced charge would result in an uplift in the number of subscribers to the service by approximately 5% (900 households), raising an additional £27,900, therefore providing a net additional cost to the council of £62,500. He stated that it would also help the Council to meet its recycling targets.

He proposed that Marketing Gloucester Limited (MGL) be instructed to remove all advertising boards from roundabouts in the City at a cost of £10,000.

- 66.5 Councillor Haigh raised a point of order. She stated that Councillor Hilton's amendment regarding the removal of advertising from the City's roundabouts contravened Council Procedure Rule 16.02 and should be deemed out of order.

- 66.6 Following the receipt of advice from the Managing Director and Monitoring Officer, the Mayor stated that the amendment regarding the removal of advertising from the City's roundabouts would be deemed out of order in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 16.02 because it was substantially the same as a motion rejected within the last six months.

- 66.7 Councillor Hilton asked for his objection to the Mayor's ruling to be recorded in the minutes.

- 66.8 Councillor Hilton proposed that the Council agree to support the County Council's commitment to set aside £50,000 to carry out an independent study to look at the 30+ Air Quality Management Areas and examine solutions to reducing levels of pollution at those sites by setting aside a maximum of £8,000 to participate in the study.

He explained that the total cost of the amendments he was proposing was £80,500 and that he proposed to fund this by moving all Council staff into Herbert and Kimberley warehouses and mothballing Phillpotts warehouse until it could be prepared for letting to the voluntary sector and start-up businesses. He stated that it could save the Council in the region of £83,000 initially and then between £300,000 and £700,000 when let. He also proposed to end the Council's LGIU subscription, saving £3,000 per year, as it duplicated information already provided by the LGA and was therefore an unnecessary expense.

He noted the savings amounted to £86,000 plus additional income from renting out Phillpotts Warehouse. He proposed that the £3,000 surplus be added to the Council balances.

- 66.9 Councillor Haigh stated that the Conservative Administration had accepted the unreasonable cuts forced upon the Council by central government and that

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ultimately residents would end up paying more Council Tax for lower quality services. She remarked that the poorest and most deprived were worst hit by the cuts and that the devolution agenda was primarily about devolving the decisions on cuts. She noted that savings continued to be delivered through shared services, job losses and increased fees and charges. She raised concerns about whether the Amey contract savings could be achieved and questioned how long the Council could continue to fund Marketing Gloucester Limited. She further questioned the Council's ability to continue protecting frontline services whilst also delivering significant savings. She stated that the Labour Group would not be supporting the proposed budget.

- 66.10 Councillor Hilton moved his first amendment proposing to reduce the annual cost of a green bin for garden waste collections by £5.
- 66.11 Councillor McLellan seconded the amendment.
- 66.12 Councillor James did not accept the amendment. He stated that it was based upon assumptions that could not be quantified.
- 66.13 Councillor Hampson stated that the amendment was not supported by any evidence.
- 66.14 Councillor Porter referenced the results of the budget consultation which demonstrated that 75% of respondents supported either an increase in the green waste collection charge or leaving it at the same level. He reported that an additional 2000 residents had taken up the service since the bin stickers had been introduced and stated that there was no evidence that to support the supposition that reducing the charge would increase the uptake.
- 66.15 Councillor Haigh explained that the premise for the garden waste charge came from a Task and Finish Group study and that it was intended to cover the cost of the service. The service should neither make a profit, nor be subsidised. If the charge was reduced it would be being subsidised by other council taxpayers.
- 66.16 Councillor McLellan commented that the increase in uptake reported by Councillor Porter would pay for the proposed reduction in cost making the service cost neutral again.
- 66.17 Councillor Hilton stated that there would be at least a 5% increase in uptake and that this could increase further in the future.
- 66.18 The amendment was put to the vote and was lost.
- 66.19 Councillor Hilton moved his second amendment seeking to set aside a maximum of £8,000 to participate in a study to look of the 30+ Air Quality Management Areas.
- 66.20 Councillor McLellan seconded the amendment.
- 66.21 Councillor James did not accept the amendment, but agreed to bring forward a report to Cabinet exploring the matter properly and gave a commitment to deal with

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the costs associated as an in-year pressure if the Council decided to participate in the study.

66.22 Councillor Hilton accepted the proposal and withdrew the amendment.

66.23 Councillor Hilton moved his third amendment proposing to move all Council staff into Herbert and Kimberley warehouses and mothball Phillpotts warehouse until it could be prepared for letting to the voluntary sector and start-up businesses. He stated that it could save the Council in the region of £83,000 initially and then between £300,000 and £700,000 when let. The amendment also proposed to end the Council's LGIU subscription, saving £3,000 per year, as it duplicated information already provided by the LGA and was therefore an unnecessary expense.

66.24 Councillor McLellan seconded the amendment.

66.25 Councillor James did not accept the amendment.

66.26 Councillor Haigh welcomed the proposal for a review of the City Council's office accommodation, but that it would need to be a thorough report. She added that she valued the LGIU subscription.

66.27 Councillor Pullen stated that mothballing a building was not a simple task and that security and maintenance matters had to be properly considered prior to making any decisions.

66.28 Councillor James highlighted his disappointment that the Liberal Democrat Group, unlike the Labour Group, had not taken up the offer of a discussion about the proposed budget and he noted that the amendments had not been subject to any consultation. He advised that an accommodation review was underway and that it was important to await the outcome before making any decisions. He noted that the figures quoted in the amendment were unachievable. He advised that he would reconsider the LGIU subscription when it was up for renewal and undertake appropriate consultation with Members.

66.29 Councillor Smith stated that mothballing a building would not simply reduce the accommodation costs by a third and that the rental estimates were unrealistic and unachievable. She reported that she found the information from the LGIU to be very valuable.

66.30 Councillor McLellan noted that his Group had at least put forward some alternative budget proposals, unlike the Labour Group. He reported that many areas of the Docks warehouse complex were empty resulting in unnecessary costs. He stated that he understood the need for a full review, but that the amendment would save the Council money in the short term.

66.31 Councillor Hilton stated that the financial estimates were realistic and that a variety of options were available for the renting out of Phillpotts Warehouse and significant income could be achieved.

66.32 The amendment was put to the vote and was lost.

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- 66.33 Councillor Noakes noted the achievement of a £200,000 reduction in the management fee for Aspire and explained that there were no savings plans for the Culture and Leisure portfolio in 2016-17 due to the implementation of a new Cultural Strategy that would drive key aspirations. She advised that £20,000 match funding was required, plus £30,000 support in kind from the Council and its partners, to meet the requirements for Arts Council funding and support in taking the strategy forward. She stated that the Festival and Events Programme demonstrated the role of MGL in supporting the Council's objectives and added that staff would continue to work hard to reduce costs and maximise revenue across her portfolio.
- 66.34 Councillor Dallimore noted that there were no forecasted savings in the Communities and Neighbourhoods portfolio, but that it was unlikely to be able to continue indefinitely. As a result of savings made in previous years, it was possible to fund the advice services at the same levels and continue grant funding for the voluntary and community sector. The Council would continue to support and engage residents via asset based community development and the successful of community building scheme would be expanded. The newly renamed Councillors' Community Fund would be increased to £2,000 through the redistribution of existing budgets and an £8,000 saving had been made in the community safety budget. She thanked staff and Members for their work on the budget, which she believed showed that the Council valued and listened to feedback from residents.
- 66.35 Councillor Porter reported that significant savings had been proposed in the Environment portfolio and that work was already underway to achieve them, with the Amey contract currently subject to negotiation. By increasing charges for some services, encouraging a higher uptake of others and working to increase recycling rates opportunities for income would be maximised.
- 66.36 Councillor McLellan stated that he considered the savings identified against the Amey contract to be unrealistic, particularly given that the contract of the fleet of vehicles was due to expire in December 2016.
- 66.37 Councillor S. Witts asked why 657 of the 1928 responses to the budget consultation were deemed to be unusable.
- 66.38 Councillor James noted that the Labour Group had not put forward any alternative budget proposals. He highlighted the significant contributions from central government for important regeneration projects, which demonstrated the government's support for the City's ambitions. He praised the work of MGL and their role in bringing visitors and external funding into the City. He undertook to ensure that Councillor S. Witts received a written response regarding the budget consultation.
- 66.39 The motion was put to the vote and, in accordance with Part 4 Rule 18.05 of the Constitution and at the request of Councillors James, Dallimore, D. Norman, Porter and Noakes, names were recorded as follows:

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<u>For</u>	<u>Against</u>	<u>Abstentions</u>
James	Field	
Dallimore	Beeley	
Noakes	Haigh	
Norman D.	Hilton	
Porter	McLellan	
Gravells	Smith	
Tracey	Hobbs	
Hanman	Lugg	
Lewis	Witts C.	
Llewellyn	Bhaimia	
Williams	Witts S.	
Dee	Brown	
Taylor	Hansdot	
Patel	Chatterton	
Randle	Pullen	
Toleman	Hampson	
Etheridge		
Norman H.		
Pearsall		
(19)	(16)	(0)

66.40 The motion was carried.

66.41 **RESOLVED** –

- (1) That the proposals for the 2016/17 budget included in the report be approved.
- (2) That the implementation of the target budget reductions set in the Money Plan 2016/2021 be approved.
- (3) That it be noted that consultation has been undertaken on budget savings proposals to achieve the level of savings required in 2016/17.

67. COUNCIL TAX SETTING 2016/17

- 67.1 Council considered a report of the Leader of the Council concerning the statutory resolutions relating to the setting of Council Tax.
- 67.2 Councillor James moved the recommendations in the report.
- 67.3 Councillor Dallimore seconded the motion.
- 67.4 Councillor Haigh stated that local Councils had little choice over what rate of Council Tax to set due to central government restrictions and therefore the Labour Group would abstain from voting.
- 67.5 Councillor Hilton stated that the Council had a duty to set Council Tax and collect it on behalf of ourselves and the other preceptors. He accepted the need to set the rate at the proposed level, but he noted the abolition of the Council Tax freeze

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incentive and added that the decision had indirectly been made by central government.

- 67.6 Councillor Pullen noted the adult social care levy that formed part of Council Tax rises across the country and sought assurances that the levy raised in Gloucester would be spent on adult social care in Gloucester.
- 67.7 Councillor Williams advised that the money raised from the adult social care levy would be spent in Gloucestershire.
- 67.8 Councillor James explained that the adult social care need was greater in Gloucester than in other parts of the County and that it was therefore likely that the City would draw more heavily on the funds raised.
- 67.9 The motion was put to the vote and, in accordance with Part 4 Rule 18.05 of the Constitution and at the request of Councillors James, Dallimore, D. Norman, Porter and Noakes, names were recorded as follows:

<u>For</u>	<u>Against</u>	<u>Abstentions</u>
Field		Haigh
Beeley		Smith
James		Hobbs
Dallimore		Lugg
Noakes		Bhaimia
Norman D.		Hansdot
Porter		Chatterton
Hilton		Pullen
Gravells		Hampson
Tracey		
McLellan		
Witts C.		
Hanman		
Lewis		
Witts. S		
Llewellyn		
Williams		
Brown		
Dee		
Taylor		
Patel		
Randle		
Toleman		
Etheridge		
Norman H.		
Pearsall		
(26)	(0)	(9)

67.10 The motion was carried.

67.11 **RESOLVED** – That the statutory resolutions, as set out in the Appendix 1 to the report, be passed.

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68. REVISED LICENSING POLICY STATEMENT - LICENSING ACT 2003

- 68.1 Council considered a report of the Head of Public Protection concerning the results of the consultation on the Draft Revised Licensing Policy Statement and to seek approval for the adoption of the revised policy statement.
- 68.2 Councillor Randle (Chair of the Licensing and Enforcement Committee) moved the recommendations in the report and explained it was not adopted in January due to an administrative oversight. She summarised the three consultation responses and reported that two had been incorporated into the revised policy.
- 68.3 Councillor Patel seconded the recommendations and urged Members to adopt the revised policy statement.
- 68.4 **RESOLVED** - That the Licensing Policy Statement 2016-2021 – Licensing Act 2003 be adopted.

69. NOTICES OF MOTION

- 69.1 No Notices of Motion had been received.

Time of commencement: 6.00 pm hours

Time of conclusion: 8.25 pm hours

Chair